Design Resource

Venkatagiri Saree - Andhra Pradesh

Art of Jamdani Weaving

by
Prof. Bibhudutta Baral, Divyadarshan C. S. and Lija M. G.
NID Campus, Bengaluru

Source:
http://www.dsource.in/resource/venkatagiri-saree-andhra-pradesh-0

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2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Making Process
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Introduction

Venkatagiri sarees are generally made of cotton, silk mix, pure silk that are weaved mostly on the traditional pit looms. These sarees are mostly woven with art of Jamdani weaving followed from about 14 generations. It is believed during the time of Venkatagiri Raja, this art of weaving started. Now about 70,000 people of Venkatagiri are involved in the making of the classic Venkatagiri saree. Previously the people from the caste of Padmashali community was mostly involved in this work, nowadays other people are also part of this work. The craftsmen from five generations are involved in the making of this Venkatagiri sarees. As Venkatagiri is a small village of the Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh.

Pure zari threads are brought from Kanchipuram, artificial zari threads mostly ordered from Surat with a cost ranging between Rs. 300 to RS. 3000 as per the pattern of the design. The adai system is followed for the insertion of the Jamdani work on the loom.

Previously more of cotton was generally preferred to suit the climatic conditions, today pure silk is favored as per the customer's requirement. Many other craftsmen exports the raw materials from different places in India gathered here and made at this place like cotton yarns from Coimbatore, Silk yarns from Bangalore, Zari from Surat and dye stuffs from Chennai, Vijayawada. It takes minimum of two days to complete a simple Jamdani work saree but gives the weaver with only RS. 200- 300 after the completion of the saree. But still the weaver is happy to see the completed beautifully designed saree which gives him/ her the satisfaction that this work was done by their hands and then they proceed to weave the next pattern of design allotted to them.

It takes minimum of two months to set the new design, lot of work goes behind it once the pattern is confirmed to them, the design is transferred from butter paper to graph sheet to the setting on to the loom. For each line of weaving the weavers set the adai settings in order and continue the laying of the pattern of design. Most of the loom sheds in Venkatagiri have the coconut rooftops that help in a good weaving of saree.

Most of the houses have a loom attached to it where the craftsmen work. Venkatagiri is located in Andhra Pradesh, as a small town at the Nellore district. It is the firm motivation of the weavers and their families the tradition of weaving of this saree is continued till today. This is usually woven with cotton or silk with zari, in some cases along with the prints from nature and elegant borders with eye-catching pallus.

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Artisans exhibiting the work done on pallu.

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Skilled artisan preparing the silk thread.

This is the machine which helps to keep the yarn untangled.

Different colours of silk threads are used to make the design on the saree.

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Tools and Raw Materials

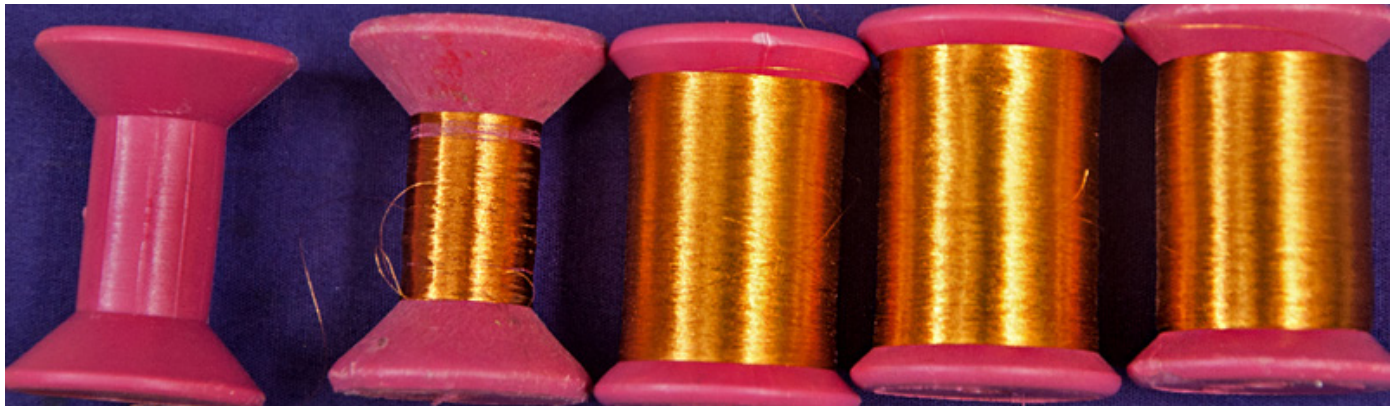
Some of the tools and raw materials basically used for making of Venkatagiri saree are shown as below.

Raw Materials:

- **Cotton Yarn:** Cotton yarns of generally high quality are generally preferred.
- **Silk Yarns:** Pure or Art silk yarns are preferred as per the cost at which it is made.
- **Zari:** Pure or Artificial zari threads are used as per customer's request.

Tools used are:

- **Charkha:** It is an equipment that winds the yarns on to the pirns.
- **Spools:** It is used to input the Jamdani designs in the weaving process.
- **Scissors:** It is used to cut out the unrequired yarns.
- **Shuttle (Paggu):** Generally used to supplement the weft yarn into the loom.
- **Pit Loom:** To interlace the warp and weft yarns.



Golden silk thread spun on the spindle.

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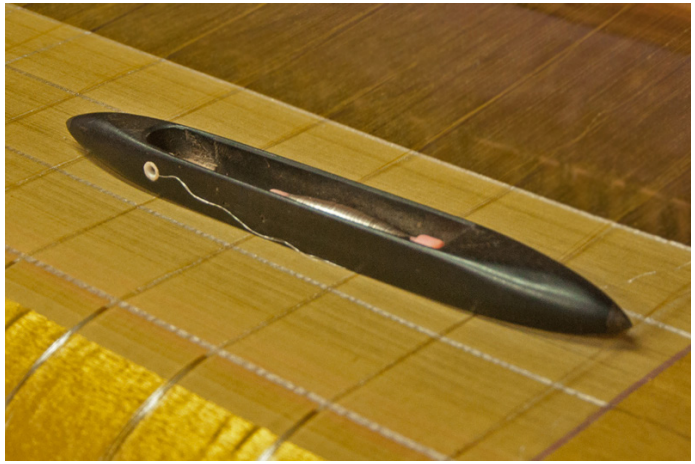
Various silk yarns.

Pirns loaded with silk thread is soaked in water.

Flying shuttle is used for the wefting process.



Flying shuttle is loaded with pirn.

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Spool spun with red and blue threads.

Punched cards are used in handloom machine to create designs.

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Silk yarns ensured and arranged in an order.

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Making Process

Venkatagiri sarees are mostly of one to two inch wide with gold border, it has a unique characteristic of woven combinations of zari and cotton threads. Designs on the borders are locally called Patti, which are nothing but dotted lines alongside the golden bands. These are also known as high quality muslins with high thread counts. Though they are transparent with their most saturated colour of yarn dyed with hues such as purple, orange, olive green, bright green, bright red.

They are woven to create fine checks and stripes, the coloured muslins are woven with two relatively wide, plain, weft bands at end pieces. These sarees are usually of finely woven, soft to touch and particularly light in weight and comfortable to wear in any season. The raw materials such as cotton are brought from Coimbatore, silk from Bangalore, zari from Surat and segregated as per the end use to be obtained. In case of weft the yarns are winded to the plastic pirns and spools, especially for the Jamdani design insertion. Zari thread segregated as per in warp way and spools.

The warp yarns are spread as per the pattern of design in the open space outside the house, special care is taken to insert each yarn with colour. The adai system is carried out for the laying of the Jamdani design's, for the insertion of the weave the adai arrangement is spread and the yarn is weaved along with extra yarn insertion with spools as per the colour to be inserted like the peacock, mango design etc. In some cases after the fabric is woven rice starch is applied for strength purposes and rolled on to the beam. This technique of weaving of the handloom Venkatagiri saree gives the softness, durability and comfort to wear that suits all types of climates. The uncertain payments from the merchants and the change of the lifestyle have forced most of the weavers to choose other means for their livelihood.

Artisan initiating the process of winding the yarn.

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Artisan untangling the knots of the yarn.

The yarn is spun into spindles with the help of a charkha.

Artisan is ensuring the spinning of the yarn in a proper method.

Yarn is been completely spun to the spindle.

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Golden silk thread is been mixed with the yellow yarn.

Pirns are winded with the yarn.

The pirns are dipped in water to avoid the friction in thread.

Bamboo beams are used to divide the threads in the handloom.

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The pirn is fixed into the flying shuttle.

Flying shuttle is used in the process of wefting threads.

Artisan is in the process of weaving the Venkatagiri saree.

Foot treadles are used in the process of weaving.

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Reed beater is used to beat threads into saree to stiffen it.

Designs are made by the artisans with different colours.

Artisan is weaving the pattern of the design.

Different colours of silk threads are used to weave the designs.

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Products

Venkatagiri sarees are usually found with various motifs, like of peacocks, rudraksha, beetle leaves, gold coins, flowers, buds, parrots, fish and geometric designs. These saree are usually found of cotton with broad zari border, cotton with thin zari border, cotton with silk, Venkatagiri silk saree etc. They generally measure around 5.18 mtrs of length and 1.17 meters of width.

The cost of a simple Venkatagiri cotton saree with zari borders to a pure Venkatagiri silk saree varies from Rs.1300 to Rs.7000. Some of the varieties commonly found are Venkatagiri Pattu, Venkatagiri silk and Venkatagiri 100 is considered the lightest of them and very popular. They vary with light colour to dark shaded colours with light or heavy Jamdani works on them.

Varied colours of silk threads are used to make floral designs on the saree.

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Different varieties of Venkatagiri sarees.

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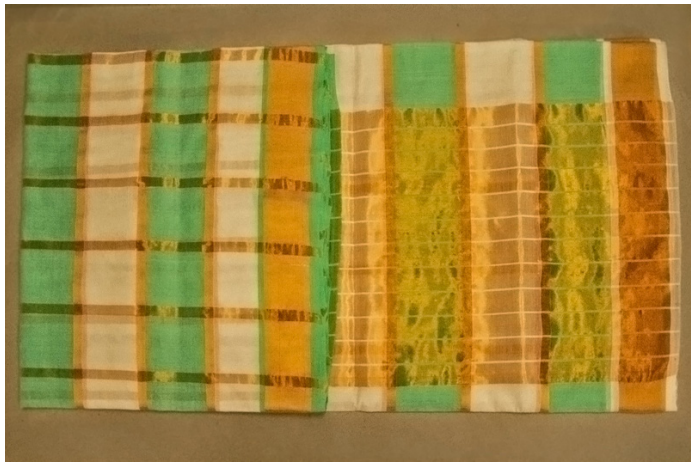

Check patterned light shaded saree.

Traditional mango motifs weaved on the saree.

Different kind of borders obtained in each saree.

Check patterned traditional purple shaded saree.

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Single green coloured saree with golden border.

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